

LOCAL



Restoration former “Botica Aruba”



ORANJESTAD - Recently, the Monuments Fund of Aruba (SMFA) celebrated the completion of the restoration of the monument located at the Steenweg 19, formerly known as the Botica Aruba and El Mercado.

The Minister of Finance and Culture Mrs. Xiomara Maduro was also in attendance. The restoration was done by Van Kessel Havenbouw NV and the building design by Archiosa. Archiosa and JOOST ABC were in charge of the supervision of the entire restoration process. Mr. Evert Bongers was in charge of the historical investigation of the building and even wrote an article called; Botica Aruba, a business of gentleman of class. The family of the owners provided the information and photos of the past. Mr. Walter Mohammed documented the different phases of the restoration project in pictures. For now, SMFA only renovated the exterior of the building because they did not find a tenant. Once they have a tenant, they will proceed with the renovation of the interior based on the tenant's requirements. In general, there are some pre-set requirements before the SMFA can purchase any building. One of the requirements is that the SMFA needs to have a long-term tenant available before even acquiring a monument. The process of acquiring this building was exceptional as they still do not have a tenant. SMFA purchased this monument without a tenant to prevent the demolition of the historical building by private entities. The building located at Steenweg 19, is a protected monument. It was built in 1925 by Addison Winfield Croes. In 1935, Mr. Croes and Gustave Nouel established “Botica Aruba” in the building. This pharmacy served the community until 1985 when it closed its doors. The owners of Palais Hindu purchased the building, and in 1993 they established “El Mercado” in the same building. Now, six years after SMFA bought the building, they restored the exterior and build it back into the original design as in 1925. The exterior of the building is very detailed and contains plenty of decorative elements. They reopened the balcony of the building and brought back all the gingerbread decorations around the windows and the balcony. By acquiring the historical building, the SMFA can guarantee its existence for future. □